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ABSTRACT

This demographic survey provides the following information on Asian Americans: (1) states with the highest Asian American population; (2) ethnic breakdown among Asians; (3) Asian immigration history and legislation affecting it; (4) individual immigration histories of Asian Americans in New York City (New York), including the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Asian Indians, Pakistanis, Vietnamese, Kampucheans, and other Southeast Asians; (5) employment, income, and public assistance statistics; (6) education; (7) languages; and (8) media and arts. (PS)

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ASIANS IN NEW YORK CITY:
A DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Prepared for
The Mayor's Task Force on the Year 2000:
Asian-American Issues

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
Office of Immigrant Affairs
and
Population Analysis Division

December 1986

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PREFACE

When we refer to Asians in this booklet, we mean most but not all of the people who are indigenous to the vast Asian mainland and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. We include the people of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea (Cambodia), Thailand, Burma, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, and the Pacific islands, including the indigenous people of Hawaii.

We exclude all peoples from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the peoples of the Middle East from Afghanistan westward.

When we refer to Asians, we further mean persons who identified themselves on the 1980 U.S. Census questionnaire as Asians or Pacific Islanders, whether they were born in the United States or abroad. We call them persons of Asian "race" or "ethnicity." If they were born outside the United States, we refer to them as foreign-born Asians or as Asian immigrants.

Unless otherwise indicated, the term Chinese is used to refer to persons originating in the People's Republic of China and also Hong Kong and Taiwan.

STATISTICS

At the time of the 1980 U.S. Census, there were seven states with 100,000 or more residents of Asian origin or descent. New York State ranked third (behind California and Hawaii) with 328,000 Asians,[1] who made up 9.4 per cent of all Asians in the United States. The table on the next page shows the distribution.

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[1]Robert W. Gardner, Bryant Robey and Peter C. Smith, "Asian Americans: Growth, Change and Diversity," Population Bulletin, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Population Reference Bureau, Inc.: Washington, DC, 1985), p. 11.

SEVEN STATES WITH 100,000 OR MORE ASIAN AMERICANS IN 1980
(POPULATION NUMBERS IN THOUSANDS)

	TOTAL POPULATION	TOTAL ASIAN*	JAPANESE	CHINESE	FILIPINO	KOREAN	ASIAN INDIAN	VIETNAMESE
United States	226,546	3,466	716	812	782	357	387	245
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
California	23,668	1,247	269	325	358	103	60	85
Percent	10.4	36.0	37.5	40.1	45.6	28.7	15.4	34.8
Hawaii	965	453	240	58	132	17	1	3
Percent	0.4	13.1	33.5	6.9	16.9	4.9	0.2	1.4
New York	17,558	328	25	147	36	33	68	6
Percent	7.8	9.4	3.5	18.1	4.6	9.3	17.5	2.4
Illinois	11,427	171	18	29	44	24	37	6
Percent	5.0	4.9	2.6	3.6	5.7	6.8	9.7	2.6
Texas	14,229	130	12	27	16	14	23	28
Percent	6.3	3.7	1.7	3.3	2.0	3.9	5.0	11.3
New Jersey	7,365	108	10	23	24	13	31	3
Percent	3.3	3.1	1.4	2.9	3.1	3.7	7.9	1.2
Washington	4,132	105	27	18	26	13	4	9
Percent	1.8	3.0	3.8	2.2	3.3	3.8	1.1	3.6

*Includes all Asian Americans, not just those listed separately.

Source: Robert W. Gardner, Bryant Robey and Peter C. Smith, "Asian Americans: Growth, Change and Diversity," Population Bulletin Vol. 40, No. 4.

In New York City alone, there were 252,840 persons of Asian origin or descent, who constituted 3.6 per cent of the city's total recorded population of 7.1 million. Of these New York City Asians, 198,340 or four-fifths were born abroad. They made up 11.7 per cent of the city's 1.68 million immigrants and 2.8 per cent of all New Yorkers.

It is important to note that foreign-born persons were probably significantly undercounted in the 1980 Census, so the true figure for the foreign-born (of all ethnicities) may have been much higher. It is certain that many undocumented aliens chose not to make themselves known to the Census Bureau.

Asian immigrants were few in the United States until the immigration law changes of 1965. European immigrants predominated until 1965, after which, in New York City, they were succeeded by Asian, Caribbean and Latin American immigrants.

Of all immigrants living in New York City in 1980, the Chinese were the only Asian group on the top ten list of countries of birth. For those who had arrived between 1975 and 1980, Koreans and Asian Indians joined the Chinese among Asians in the top ten.

IMMIGRANTS' TOP 10 COUNTRIES OF BIRTH BY PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION TO U.S.
NEW YORK CITY, 1980

TOTAL 1980	PRE-1965	1965-1974	1975-1980
1. Italy	1. Italy	1. Dominican Rep.	1. Dominican Rep.
2. Dominican Rep.	2. Poland	2. Jamaica	2. USSR
3. Jamaica	3. Germany	3. China	3. China
4. USSR	4. USSR	4. Italy	4. Jamaica
5. China	5. Ireland	5. Haiti	5. Guyana
6. Poland	6. Cuba	6. Trinidad/Tobago	6. Haiti
7. Germany	7. Austria	7. Ecuador	7. Korea
8. Haiti	8. China	8. Colombia	8. Colombia
9. Cuba	9. Dominican Rep.	9. Cuba	9. Trinidad/Tobago
10. Ireland	10. Hungary	10. Greece	10. India

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata File
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

Persons of Chinese origin or descent accounted for half the city's Asians in 1980. Asian Indians were second with about a fifth of the citywide Asian total. The next table shows the breakdown of the city's largest Asian groups, and the numbers of each group that were born in the United States and abroad.

PERSONS OF ASIAN RACE, BY ETHNICITY, RESIDING IN NEW YORK CITY, 1980

ETHNICITY	TOTAL #	TOTAL %	NATIVE-BORN #	NATIVE-BORN %	FOREIGN-BORN #	FOREIGN-BORN %
TOTAL	252,840	100.0	54,500	100.0	198,340	100.0
Chinese	125,900	49.8	28,920	53.1	96,980	48.9
Asian Indian	48,860	19.3	9,840	18.0	39,020	19.7
Filipino	26,380	10.4	5,500	10.1	20,880	10.5
Korean	24,220	9.6	3,360	6.2	20,860	10.5
Japanese	14,540	5.8	4,100	7.5	10,440	5.3
Vietnamese	2,880	1.1	240	.4	2,640	1.3
Hawaiian	1,460	.6	1,240	2.3	220	.1
Other Asian, Pacific Islander	8,600	3.4	1,300	2.4	7,300	3.7

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata File
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

An immigrant who identified him- or herself as, for example, Asian Indian may not necessarily have been born in India nor even in Asia. Perhaps he or she was born in Malaysia or Guyana. Almost a third of all foreign-born Chinese were not born in mainland China. Some were born in Hong Kong and Taiwan, as the following table shows. In general, the table shows where immigrant Asians were born, not necessarily the country with which they identified themselves ethnically. The table also shows the period in which they came to the United States.

FOREIGN-BORN PERSONS OF ASIAN RACE RESIDING IN N.Y.C. 1980
BY BIRTHPLACE AND PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION TO U.S.

BIRTHPLACE	TOTAL		PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION					
			PRE-1965		1965-1974		1975-1980	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL (Number)	198,340	100.0	31,660	16.0	85,300	43.0	81,380	41.0
China	60,140	100.0	19,160	31.9	24,240	40.3	16,740	27.8
Philippines	20,700	100.0	2,120	10.2	11,680	56.4	6,900	33.3
India	20,360	100.0	660	3.2	9,740	47.8	9,960	48.9
Hong Kong	18,320	100.0	2,720	14.8	9,420	51.4	6,180	33.7
Korea	18,220	100.0	840	4.6	6,780	37.2	10,600	58.2
Japan	9,580	100.0	1,460	15.2	2,780	29.0	5,340	55.7
Guyana	8,080	100.0	160	2.0	2,660	32.9	5,260	65.1
Taiwan	5,720	100.0	260	4.5	2,920	51.0	2,540	44.4
Pakistan	4,000	100.0	160	4.0	1,540	38.5	2,300	57.5
Vietnam	3,460	100.0	20	0.6	160	4.6	3,280	94.8
Thailand	2,660	100.0	60	2.3	1,720	64.7	880	33.1
Trinidad/Tobago	2,340	100.0	160	6.8	1,240	53.0	940	40.2
Jamaica	1,840	100.0	140	7.6	980	53.3	720	39.1
South Korea	1,840	100.0	200	10.9	740	40.2	900	48.9
Burma	1,400	100.0	40	2.9	760	54.3	600	42.9
Bangladesh	1,220	100.0	60	4.9	420	34.4	740	60.7
Indonesia	960	100.0	140	14.6	460	47.9	360	37.5
Malaysia	660	100.0	20	3.0	360	54.5	280	42.4
Canada	560	100.0	160	28.6	340	60.7	60	10.7
France	520	100.0	40	7.7	20	3.8	460	88.5
England	500	100.0	20	4.0	180	36.0	300	60.0
Other Countries	8,100	100.0	1,620	20.0	3,260	40.2	3,220	39.8
Country Not Reported	7,160	100.0	1,440	20.1	2,900	40.5	2,820	39.4

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Public Microdata File
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

The figures presented in this section were all obtained from the 1980 Census. Obviously, the numbers of Asians in the city have increased markedly since that time, both by natural increase and by immigration. In most cases, the trends discerned in the period 1975-1980 were predictive of what happened later, but there were post-census increases in some ethnic groups--Southeast Asian refugees, for example--that could not be predicted from census data. It is estimated that the city's Asian population increased somewhere between 35 and 50 per cent from 1980 to 1986, bringing it to a total between 340,000 and 380,000.

ASIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORY

Asian immigration to the United States began on the West Coast. The Gold Rush which started in 1848 and the construction of the railroads in the 1860s attracted Chinese male laborers to the American West. There were virtually no Chinese in the United States before 1850. More than 41,000 arrived in the decade 1851-1860; 64,000 arrived between 1861 and 1870; and 123,000 between 1871 and

1880.[2] The vast majority settled in California.

The Chinese were faced with hostility from the beginning of their settlement in the United States. The climate worsened in the 1970s when the country underwent a severe depression and the Chinese were blamed for unemployment. In 1880, the U.S. government signed a treaty with China which permitted the U.S. to limit or suspend the immigration of Chinese laborers if the government saw fit to do so. The government was quick to use this new authority, and in 1882, Congress passed the first of several Chinese Exclusion Acts prohibiting the immigration of Chinese laborers.

As a result of these Acts, Chinese immigration came to a halt between 1882 and 1943, when the U.S. ended Chinese exclusion in deference to China as a World War II ally.

The Japanese were the only other Asian group to immigrate in large numbers to the United States in the 19th century. They also settled primarily in California. More than 25,000 Japanese males, primarily agricultural workers, arrived in the 1890s, compared to 2,000 in the 1880s and 150 in the 1870s.[3]

Ethnic Japanese came from Hawaii as well as from Japan, especially after U.S. annexation of Hawaii in 1900. Almost 130,000 Japanese arrived in the United States between 1901 and 1910.[4]

Like the Chinese, the Japanese faced hostility, violence and official discrimination. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese government entered into the so-called Gentlemen's Agreement in which Japan agreed to suspend the emigration of laborers to the United States. Japanese immigration dropped sharply until passage of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 (which ended the Asian exclusions) though Japanese laborers already in the United States were able throughout to bring in their wives and children.

In the two decades following the Gentlemen's Agreement, the U.S. government passed other immigration measures which effectively excluded all Asians except for Filipinos, who were able to enter because the Philippines had become a U.S. possession in 1898. Asians also were denied the right to become citizens by naturalization, a situation that did not change for most Asian groups until 1952 when the McCarran-Walter Act ended the Asian exclusions and made citizenship a possibility for aliens from all parts of the world. The

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[2] Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 1984), p. 2.

[3] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[4] Ibid., p. 3.

Chinese received the right to citizenship somewhat earlier (in 1943) as did some Filipino veterans of World War II.

Although most foreign-born Asians could not become citizens until 1952, American-born Asians were citizens by virtue of the 14th Amendment. Their entitlement to citizenship was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1895 in the case of Wong Kim Ark, an American-born Chinese who was denied reentry into the United States after a visit to China on the basis of the Chinese Exclusion Acts. The Court ruled that he was a citizen and that the Chinese exclusion did not apply.

Citizenship did not prove, however, to be the protection it should have been for Asian-Americans. It did not prevent 120,000 Japanese-Americans, two-thirds of whom were U.S. citizens, from being interned in concentration camps during World War II.

Although the McCarran-Walter Act was a breakthrough for Asian-Americans in that it ended the Asian exclusions and established the right to naturalization, it did not make it possible for large numbers of Asians to immigrate to the United States. McCarran-Walter based immigration from the Eastern Hemisphere on a national origins quota system that favored immigrant groups already well-represented in the United States. Asians had a very small population base from which to derive their quotas.

The quota system was radically revised with passage of the Hart-Celler Act of 1965. Hart-Celler replaced the unequal national origins quotas with a system of equal quotas for all Eastern Hemisphere nations. Furthermore, Hart-Celler changed the visa "preference" system to one that favored family reunification over job skills. Under the new preference system, any one immigrant could ultimately bring over several close family members, who in turn could do the same thing for their close relatives.

The impact of the new preference system can be seen in the growth of New York City's Chinese community. In 1960, there were 20,000 foreign-born Chinese in the city; in 1970, there were 37,000; and in 1980, 85,000.

In many Asian countries, however, the demand for immigrant visas far exceeds availability. The People's Republic of China, India, Korea, the Philippines and Hong Kong all have huge backlogs. The Philippines' quota is so backlogged, for example, that some relatives have been waiting for visas for more than ten years. Hong Kong suffers under its status as a colonial possession rather than an independent nation, which gives it a smaller quota, although its visa problems have been eased somewhat by a provision of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 which raised annual colonial quotas from 600 to 5,000.

The Refugee Act of 1980 affected Asian immigration by setting up an admissions system for refugees that was outside the regular

immigration system, and which thereby provided another avenue for Asian admissions.[5] In FY 1984, nearly three-quarters of all refugees to the United States were from the nations of Southeast Asia, especially Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos. Southeast Asian refugees began to flock to the United States in the mid-1970s after communist governments took power in their homelands.

THE CHINESE IN NEW YORK CITY

The Chinese were the first Asian group to settle in New York City although only 6,000 were living in the city as of 1900.[6] By 1980, the recorded Chinese population (counting both U.S.-born and foreign-born Chinese) had risen to 124,000, making New York the U.S. city with the largest number of Chinese residents, surpassing even San Francisco.

Before World War II, New York's Chinatown was a community of elderly bachelors. Chinese war brides and refugees arriving after the war began to alter the almost exclusively male character of the community. Finally, Hart-Celler permitted the transformation of Chinatown into a community bustling with young families.

Most of the early Chinatown residents had come from the county of Toishan in the southern Chinese province of Kwangtung. The post-1965 immigrants are more varied in their origins, coming from Hong Kong and Taiwan as well as urban areas of northern China. Various dialects, cuisines and customs now coexist in a previously homogeneous neighborhood. Since 1980, a small community of ethnic Chinese refugees from Vietnam has also settled in Chinatown.

As Chinatown's population has exceeded the neighborhood's physical capacity, Chinese have moved into parts of the Lower East Side, Little Italy, Queens and Brooklyn.

In Queens, Chinese live in Elmhurst, Flushing, Astoria, Corona, Jackson Heights and Rego Park. Brooklyn's Chinese live in Borough Park, Flatbush, Bay Ridge, Park Slope, Midwood, Sheepshead Bay and Sunset Park. Chinese settling in these boroughs tend to seek locations with easy subway access to Chinatown, which remains the hub of community life.

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[5]Refugees were defined in the Act as persons unable or unwilling to return to their homelands because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

[6]Abeles, Schwartz, Haeckel and Silverblatt, Inc., The Chinatown Garment Industry Study (New York: International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Local 23-25, and the New York Skirt and Sportswear Association, 1983), p. 89.

Chinese have also settled in the Bronx, in much smaller numbers; they cluster in the Pelham Parkway, Fordham Road and Bedford Park areas, and near Fordham University.

THE JAPANESE

Before World War II, New York's Japanese community was small. After their release from internment camps, many U.S.-born Japanese and Japanese immigrants chose to resettle in the East rather than on the West Coast.

Perhaps because they feared another mass roundup, but more likely because their socioeconomic status gave them greater mobility, these newcomers to New York did not settle in any one area; they dispersed themselves, and even today they remain dispersed. In addition to the permanent settlers here, there is a flourishing community of Japanese businessmen and their families who are here on three- or four-year assignments for their Japanese firms.

Japanese in New York live primarily in Manhattan and Queens, with some enclaves on the Upper West Side of Manhattan and in Long Island City, Flushing, Bayside and Forest Hills in Queens. The transient business community is dispersed in the same general locations, although many of the businessmen with jobs in New York commute from Westchester, Nassau and New Jersey. Only recently has there been much contact between the permanent and transient Japanese communities in New York; several Japanese organizations are trying to increase cooperation between them in areas of common concern.

THE KOREANS

Koreans began immigrating to New York in relatively small numbers in the 1950s, after the Korean War. As overpopulation and political dissent intensified in South Korea in the 1970s, New York became a magnet for Korean immigrants.

Dr. Ill Soo Kim of Drew University estimates that more than 60 per cent of Korean male householders in the New York metropolitan area were engaged in white collar occupations prior to emigration.[7] Prevented from taking up professional or white collar work because of their lack of proficiency in English, many Korean immigrants have become small business owners. Since 1980, Korean fruit and vegetable stores, fish markets and dry cleaning establishments have become ubiquitous in all five boroughs, though Koreans are by no means restricted to those businesses.

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[7] Ill Soo Kim, New Urban Immigrants: The Korean Community in New York (Princeton: University Press, 1981), p. 40.

Most of New York's Koreans live in Queens, particularly in Flushing, Woodside and Long Island City. In Brooklyn, Koreans live in Flatbush, especially around Church Avenue. Manhattan has a large Korean financial and wholesale business district on and around Broadway from West 23rd to West 40th Streets.

FILIPINOS

Filipinos were U.S. nationals from 1898 to 1946, when the Philippines attained independence, and they were able to migrate to the United States much more freely than other Asians. In the early part of the century, many Filipinos worked in western agriculture. Filipino immigration to New York began in the 1960s when registered nurses, lab technicians and, to a lesser extent, physicians arrived to fill a shortage of health care professionals. Passage of Hart-Celler in 1965 increased the opportunities for immigration, and the imposition of martial law in the Philippines in 1972 increased the impetus for it.

New York's Filipinos live mostly in Queens, where they have settled in Elmhurst, Woodside, Jackson Heights, Jamaica, Hollis, Holliswood, Bayside and Queens Village. In Brooklyn, there are Filipinos in Crown Heights, Sheepshead Bay, Bay Ridge and Prospect Park. Manhattan's Filipinos tend to live on the East Side in Stuyvesant Town and in the area just to the west, between 14th and 20th Streets. There are also Filipinos in the Fordham Road area of the Bronx and in Staten Island. Many Filipinos live close to the hospitals and medical centers where they are employed.

ASIAN INDIANS

New York City has the largest Asian Indian community in the United States. Asian Indians have been immigrating to New York steadily since the late 1960s, pulled by the opportunities inherent in the Hart-Celler Act and pushed by inadequate job prospects for professionals at home. New York's Asian Indian community consists of immigrants from all parts of India, but most come from the state of Gujarat.

Most Asian Indians live in Queens, especially in Flushing, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, Forest Hills, Woodside and Woodhaven. Some Asian Indians are dispersed through Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island as well.

PAKISTANIS

New York's Pakistani community is also the largest in the United States. Like other new immigrant groups, Pakistanis have been attracted by employment opportunities and the family reunification provisions of Hart-Celler. Pakistani immigration to New York began after Hart-Celler and accelerated in the late 1970s and early 1980s. A current impetus for Pakistani immigration is the drying up of work opportunities in the Middle East, which was an

important area of Pakistani employment during the oil heyday of the 1970s.

Pakistanis in New York live mostly in Queens--in Elmhurst, Flushing, Astoria, Jackson Heights, Jamaica and Corona. Large numbers also live in Brooklyn, especially in Coney Island and around Flatbush and Church Avenues. Much smaller numbers live in Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island.

Most Pakistanis in New York come from the state of Punjab.

THE VIETNAMESE

American involvement in the Indochina conflict came to an end in 1975 when the South Vietnamese government collapsed and the communists took control of all of Vietnam. After the unification, the communist government instituted oppressive measures against the professional class, former members of the South Vietnamese army, and anyone who had worked closely with Americans. Thousands of Vietnamese fled their country and sought refuge in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Hong Kong.

Most refugees who left Vietnam in 1975 were well-educated professionals from the South. In 1979, when China invaded the northern provinces of Vietnam, the Vietnamese government ordered ethnic Chinese to leave the country. Other Vietnamese left along with the ethnic Chinese. This time the exodus was from the rural areas of the North.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, more than half a million Vietnamese refugees have been settled in the United States, about 13,000 of them in New York City. Many of the city's Vietnamese live in Flushing and Elmhurst, and there are also communities in Flatbush and around Fordham Road.

KAMPUCHEANS

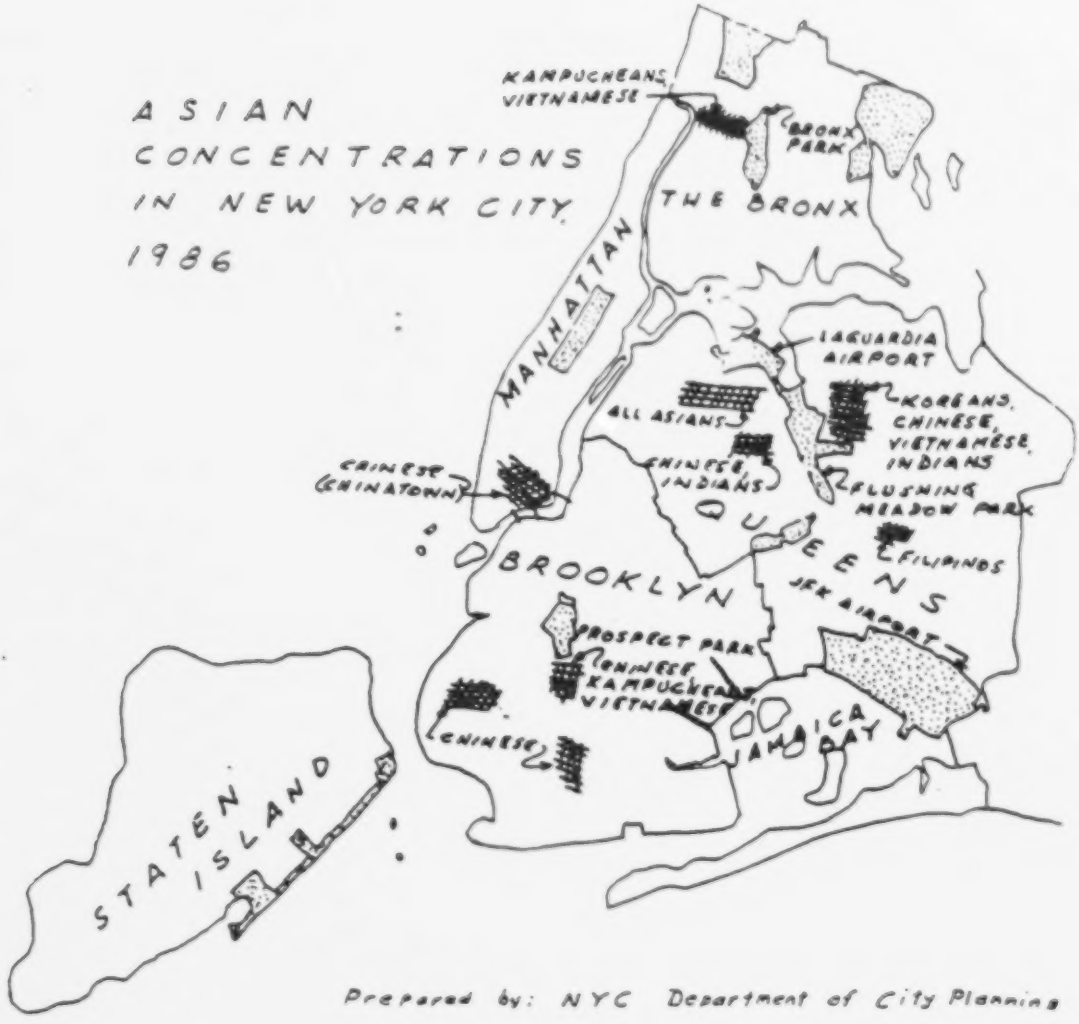
As in Vietnam, communists took power in Kampuchea (Cambodia) in 1975. The victorious Khmer Rouge undertook a campaign of terror against the professional classes and against all persons who were suspected of sympathy with the West. Then, in 1979, Vietnam invaded Kampuchea. To escape the Khmer Rouge and the invading Vietnamese, hundreds of thousands of Kampucheans fled to neighboring countries. Most of those who escaped were from rural areas and had little or no education.

About 140,000 Kampucheans have been settled in the United States, approximately 6,000 of them in New York City. Three-quarters of New York's Kampucheans live in the Fordham and White Plains Road areas of the Bronx, and the rest in Sunset Park and around Ocean Avenue in Flatbush.

OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIANS

About 100 families of Laotian refugees, totaling 350 people, have been settled in New York City. The Lao are largely from rural areas. In Brooklyn, they live in the Church Avenue area of North Flatbush, and near Fordham Road in the Bronx.

About 1,000 Malaysians and 4,500 Thais have settled in New York, scattered through the five boroughs but with a concentration of Thais in the Bronx.



EMPLOYMENT, INCOME AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Although some Asian groups are associated in the public mind with particular occupations (Korean greengrocers, for example), Asians in New York actually work in a wide range of occupations. As the next table shows, the single largest occupation for Asian men is "manager or administrator," and for women, "sewing machine operator." Asian men are slightly more likely to work than Asian women, and they are distributed among a wider range of occupations.

OCCUPATIONS WITH 500 OR MORE EMPLOYED PERSONS OF ASIAN RACE, 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, BY SEX NEW YORK CITY, 1980

MALES		FEMALES	
TOTAL EMPLOYED	68,300	TOTAL EMPLOYED	54,880
Manager/Administrator	6,480	Sewing Machine Operator	12,820
Cook	5,820	Registered Nurse	4,920
Waiter	3,980	Secretary	2,420
Sales	2,820	Bookkeeper	2,320
Physician	2,560	Cashier	1,960
Sales Proprietor/Supervisor	2,360	Sales	1,840
Accountant	2,120	Physician	1,560
Food Prep/Service Supervisor	2,060	Manager/Administrator	1,500
Office Clerk	1,220	Office Clerk	1,420
Food Preparation Worker	1,180	Accountant	1,100
Civil/Electrical Engineer	1,000	Nursing Aide	980
Pressing Machine Operator	960	Typist	920
Machine Operator	880	Waitress	880
Production Supervisor	860	Data Entry Keyer	800
Sewing Machine Operator	720	Sales Proprietor/Supervisor	540
Cashier	720	Bank Teller	520
Bookkeeper	720	Laboratory Technologist/Technician	500
Janitor	720	Licensed Practical Nurse	500
Taxi Driver/Chauffeur	720	Other	17,380
Computer Programmer	660		
Laundry/Dry Cleaning Operator	640		
Sales Rep, Mining/Mfg./Wholesale	600		
Auto Mechanic	520		
Technician	520		
Drafting Occupation	520		
Computer Operator	500		
Other	26,440		

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata File
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

Families with an Asian head of household have about the same annual income, overall, as families with a non-Asian household head. In 1979 (the year for which the census records income information), Asian families tended to have higher family incomes when the household head was under 44 years of age. Above that age break, non-Asian families showed a higher annual income.

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME IN 1979 FOR ALL FAMILIES AND FAMILIES WITH A HOUSEHOLDER OF ASIAN RACE, BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER NEW YORK CITY, 1980

HOUSEHOLDER AGE	ALL FAMILIES	NON-ASIAN FAMILIES	ASIAN FAMILIES
15 to 24 Years	$ 7,068	$ 7,015	$ 10,839
25 to 34 Years	14,634	14,453	17,806
35 to 44 Years	17,026	16,878	19,993
45 to 54 Years	21,104	21,213	18,051
55 to 59 Years	22,472	22,578	17,714
60 to 64 Years	20,666	20,734	17,015
65 Years and Older	13,724	13,805	10,371

Source: 1980 U.S. Census, Summary Tape File 4
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

One reason for the higher family income among young Asian families was that these families were more likely than others to have two or more workers per family.

Although Asian family income was, on average, about the same as non-Asian family income, fewer Asian families lived below the poverty level. In 1979, 17.3 per cent of non-Asian families had incomes below poverty, compared to 13.0 per cent of Asian families.

More remarkable was the low use that poor Asian families made of public assistance. Only 12.8 per cent of Asian families with below poverty-level incomes received public assistance, compared to 51.9 per cent of non-Asian families below the poverty threshold.

POVERTY STATUS AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE USE IN NEW YORK CITY FAMILIES, 1980

	TOTAL FAMILIES		NON-ASIAN FAMILIES		ASIAN FAMILIES	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Families with Income Below Poverty Level	304,031	100.0	296,482	100.0	7,549	100.0
Income Below Poverty Level, Receiving Public Assistance	154,764	50.9	153,799	51.9	965	12.8
Income Below Poverty Level, Not Receiving Public Assistance	149,267	49.1	142,683	48.1	6,584	87.2

Source: 1980 U.S. Census, Summary File Tape 4
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

Public assistance use among Asians has risen, on the average, since 1979 because of the arrival of large numbers of Southeast Asian refugees and their greater tendency to make use of public assistance benefits, at least in their first years after resettlement. The 1990 census will show the extent of the change.

EDUCATION

At every educational level--high school, college, and graduate school--New York City's Asians are more likely to be graduates or to have post-college education than the rest of the city's population. Their educational levels could have been attained abroad or in the United States.

YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED FOR ALL PERSONS
AND PERSONS OF ASIAN RACE 25 YEARS AND OVER BY SEX
NEW YORK CITY 1980

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE COMPLETION	TOTAL		NON-ASIAN		ASIAN	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Males, 25 Years and Over	1,991,718	100.0	1,915,754	100.0	75,964	100.0
Not High School Graduate	752,667	37.8	729,319	38.1	23,348	30.7
High School Graduate	1,239,041	62.2	1,186,425	61.9	52,616	69.3
College Graduate	425,274	21.4	396,082	20.1	29,192	38.4
College Graduate Plus	239,552	12.0	223,383	11.7	16,169	21.3
Females, 25 Years and Over	2,494,131	100.0	2,417,691	100.0	76,440	100.0
Not High School Graduate	1,033,960	41.5	1,005,305	41.6	28,655	37.5
High School Graduate	1,460,171	58.5	1,412,386	58.4	47,785	62.5
College Graduate	351,283	14.1	328,771	13.6	22,512	29.5
College Graduate Plus	180,657	7.2	170,572	7.1	10,085	13.2

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Summary Tape File 4
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

The number of Asians in the New York City public schools has more than tripled since the late 1960s, keeping pace with the growth in the Asian population, as the following table shows.

ASIAN STUDENTS IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1968-1985

SCHOOL YEAR	TOTAL STUDENTS	ASIAN STUDENTS	ASIANS AS PERCENT OF TOTAL
1968	1,121,922	14,917	1.3
1969	1,123,165	16,094	1.4
1970	1,141,075	17,491	1.6
1971	1,146,460	18,931	1.6
1972	1,128,996	20,452	1.8
1973	1,106,861	22,067	2.0
1974	1,100,224	23,252	2.1
1975	1,099,004	24,277	2.2
1976	1,007,191	27,824	2.6
1977	1,036,243	30,408	2.9
1978	998,947	32,377	3.2
1979	963,048	36,339	3.8
1980	943,805	38,197	4.0
1981	924,215	40,626	4.4
1982	918,384	44,614	4.9
1983	924,842	49,316	5.3
1984	931,768	54,287	5.8
1985	936,231	57,631	6.2

Source: Office of Equal Opportunity, NYC Board of Education, as compiled from Annual Board of Education Pupil Ethnic Census Reports
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

The Asian enrollment for each type or level of school is shown in the next table.

ASIAN STUDENTS IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1968-1985 BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	Elementary Schools	Junior/ Intermediate Schools	Academic- Comprehensive Schools	Vocational/ Technical Schools	Special Schools*
1968	8,201	2,770	3,443	480	23
1969	9,094	3,187	3,331	463	19
1970	9,945	3,528	3,550	446	22
1971	10,615	3,698	4,079	501	38
1972	11,127	4,218	4,561	501	45
1973	11,821	4,543	5,110	558	35
1974	12,330	4,772	5,415	688	47
1975	12,504	4,984	5,918	830	41
1976	14,685	5,547	6,698	823	71
1977	16,050	6,064	7,376	836	82
1978	17,321	6,091	7,918	939	108
1979	18,412	6,758	9,910	1,039	220
1980	19,789	7,445	9,947	892	124
1981	20,595	8,171	10,782	910	168
1982	22,489	9,192	11,898	846	189
1983	24,708	10,060	13,389	929	230
1984	26,962	11,323	14,922	827	253
1985	28,249	12,114	16,048	949	271

*Special Schools include schools for handicapped, special education, and alternative school programs.

Source: Office of Equal Opportunity, NYC Board of Education, as compiled from Annual Board of Education Pupil Ethnic Census Reports
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

In the 1985-86 school year, Asians made up 6.4 per cent of the city's high school enrollment and about the same percentage--6.8--of the enrollment in academic-comprehensive high schools. They represented less than their share--only 3.0 per cent--of the vocational high school population, but more than their share--10.5 per cent--of the alternative high school population.

Asian students were dramatically over-represented at three of the city's specialized high schools: 24.5 per cent at Brooklyn Tech, 22.3 per cent at Bronx Science, and 36.5 per cent at Stuyvesant High School.

Asian students were not without their problems, however; in the 1984-85 school year, 17,500 Asian students fell below the cut-off score for adequate English language proficiency.

LANGUAGE

In 1980, Chinese in its various dialects was the language most likely to be spoken at home by the city's Asians. English was the language second most likely to be spoken at home, followed by Korean, Tagalog, the Indian languages, and Japanese.

Of the 111,000 speakers of Chinese, a little more than 40 per cent reported that they spoke English poorly or not at all. The next table shows the languages spoken by the city's Asians, and the percentage of each language group that reported difficulty in speaking English.

PERSONS OF ASIAN RACE 3 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER
BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH
NEW YORK CITY 1980

LANGUAGE SPOKEN	TOTAL	SPEAK ENGLISH NOT WELL OR NOT AT ALL	
		#	%
Total	240,260	62,780	26.1
Chinese	110,980	46,380	41.8
English	38,780	0	0.0
Korean	21,040	7,000	33.3
Tagalog	18,520	1,040	5.6
Hindi/Indic/Urdu	14,380	1,260	8.8
Japanese	10,600	2,720	25.7
Spanish	2,900	700	24.1
Gujarathi	2,820	280	9.9
Thai	2,700	580	21.5
Malayalam	1,880	120	6.4
Vietnamese	1,760	720	40.9
Bengali	1,680	240	14.3
Punjabi	1,480	420	28.4
Telugu	860	*	*
Tamil	860	*	*
Marathi	740	*	*
Indonesian	680	*	*
Formosan	680	*	*
Other	6,860	1,080	15.7
Not Reported	60	0	0.0

*Because of small sample size, these numbers may not be statistically reliable.

Source: 1980 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata File
Prepared by: NYC Department of City Planning

ASIAN MEDIA AND ARTS

New York City is extremely rich in Asian media and in organizations dedicated to Asian arts. The strength of the Asian press in New York is particularly striking. In 1986, there were ten Chinese-language and five Korean-language newspapers published daily in New York City. New York was also home to four Asian-language weeklies (two Chinese, one Korean, and one Japanese), two biweeklies (one Korean, one Japanese), and three English-language weeklies serving the Asian Indian and Filipino communities. An informal survey of newsstands showed that Asian New Yorkers also had easy access to a number of ethnic newspapers published outside of New York, including six more Chinese-language dailies and a Filipino daily written in English.

In New York City as a whole, about 600 hours of television time were directed weekly to foreign-born or foreign-language audiences. Most of this programming was broadcast in Spanish, but an impressive 26 per cent was in Chinese. There were smaller numbers of hours broadcast for Asian Indians, Japanese and Koreans.

New York had a full-time Chinese-language cable radio station. Various other commercial and non-commercial radio stations made available a total of about 300 hours weekly for Asian-language broadcasting.

More than 50 organizations in New York were involved in teaching, exhibiting and performing Asia's diverse art forms, including music, dance, theater and painting.

CREDITS

This booklet was produced under the supervision of Elizabeth Bogen, director of the Office of Immigrant Affairs. Tabulations, research, writing, editing and mapping were done by Jean Steingasser, Lucia Capodilupo, Hailu Kebede, Thomas Willadsen, Raul Fuentes and Samuel Bogen (volunteer).

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